

PERFINS OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

By D.A. Pocock

Little seems to have been written about this subject: lists of the W.A. and O.S. have been printed but, to-date, the rest is silence. However, as a newcomer to this field I have the Temerity to put pen to paper if only to serve as a starting point for further research and discovery. Being "on the spot" with good historical records also helps although all postal information regarding licence and permits to private firms was destroyed during World War 2.

To-date, and after only 6-months searching, I have found 13 private perfins, the O.S. and W.A. which here I propose to ignore, and 1 further "Official" that could be confused with a private emission.

Western Australia in spite of its size, being nearly as large as Europe, is (and was) a small community as regards population. If we consider the population of the State at the turn of the century it amounted to some 200,000 persons of whom some $\frac{3}{4}$ lived in the Perth-Freemantle metropolitan area. The same proportion applies today. It is, therefore, not surprising that a community the size of Plymouth or Dundee has not been as prolific as the U.K. or the U.S.A. in its perfin production!

Below are listed the known perfins of Western Australia together with the identities where I have proof or reasonable evidence of same. In some cases this evidence has come from the firms themselves, where current Managing Directors remember their start as office boys actually perforating the stamps. This in turn has lead to the discovery and, therefore, to the preservation, of the actual perforating machines.

As expected the perforation can exist in all possible positions resultant from single or multiple machines working on folded sheets of stamps. The practice began in the 1890's and examples have only been found (with the exception of the single 3mm and 4mm hole punctures) on the 1885, 1899, 1902 and 1905 series.

Other W.A. firms apart from those listed below have subsequently introduced the practice after 1913 but specific (State) identification is obviously more difficult on the Commonwealth issues.

The list of W.A. perfins is as follows,

1.	B.&A.	15/16/10	5mm		use 1895 - 1899
2.	C.D./Co.	8,10/14,12	5mm		use pre 1900
3.	D.&J./F.	11,12,7/8	7mm) D&J	First recorded 1901
4.	D.J.F.	12,9,9	11½mm) Fowler	First recorded 1911
5.	F.&G.	8,14,9	6mm	Foy and Gibson	First recorded 1911.
6.	G.W./S./&Co.	11,14/9/12,14	5mm	George Wood Son& Company,	First recorded 1908
7.	G.W./F	14,17/10	6½mm	George Wills, Freemantle.	First recorded 1905

8.	G.D.Co./P.	10,11,12/10	5mm) Goode, Durrant & Co.	1902
9.	G.D.Co.	10,11,12	5½mm) Perth	1904
10.	H.S./&Co.	9,9/9,10	6½mm	Harris Scarfs and Company.	
				First recorded	1911
11.	M.K.	22,15	14½mm		First recorded 1909
12	V.O.Co.	9,10,16	7mm	Vacuum Oil Company.	
				First recorded	1908
13.	W.A./&Co.	14,10/14,12	5½mm	William Sandover & Company.	
				First recorded	1911

Whilst the potentially confusing perfin is:

P.W.D. which is (was) Public Works Department.

The machine producing type 4 is now in the author's possession and produces a block of 4 perforated at a time. Its use ceased before World War 2.

Types 3, 6 and 8 are recorded on South Australia with "A" for Adelaide instead of the "P" on the last.

Types 4, 5, 10, 12 and 13 are known on Commonwealth issues. In the case of type 12 there are three machine types used during the period and the last used in a single punch is also now in the author's possession. Type 12 is one of the few companies continuing the practice after World War 2,

May I conclude making no claim to completeness for this listing. I will be happy to hear of other types and also of stamps with the above dies in members, collections, especially if they extend the dates of usage.

Finally, I would like to hear of fellow collectors of other Australian States Perfine or Commonwealth types.

STOP PRESS : B&A is almost certainly BROWN & ALLEN - boot manufacturers who went out of business in 1898.

CD&Co was most probably COURTHOPE DRUMMOND & Co. - auctioneers and insurance agents who split, up in 1898.

W.A. Annual Directory & Guide is the source for these conclusions.

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